

# BESIEGED CITY



MENGCHEN NIU

*"Those who are outside want to get in, and those who are inside  
want to get out."*

GABRIELA THOMAS | PRODUCING FINAL | DOUG CLAYBOURNE

# BESIEGED CITY

## LOGLINE

**Two violinist brothers, from an immigrant family, struggle under immense cultural pressures while rivaling for their parent's approval and need to perform.**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NBdEnSVp-fo> | SCRIPT : 22 PAGES

## BESIEGED CITY SYNOPSIS

In this 20-minute dramatic short, Besieged City follows the lives of Yang and Victor, Chinese half-brothers. Victor is a gifted violinist, fueling competition with Yang, an emerging actor, who once played violin as well but succumbed to the belief of his own mediocrity. After Victor's admittance into the Curtis Institute of Music, Yang accompanies him to Philadelphia in order to audition for a film role as a violinist, a role his father does not care for. By accident, Yang discovers Victor is auditioning for the same role as well. Jealousy erupts as Yang assumes a paternal role, forcing Victor into a rigorous practice schedule.

Unbeknownst to Yang, the pressure of performing and the expectations from their father have become too much for Victor. Victor yearns to live a normal life and shed the burden of being a prodigy. Once Yang learns Victor has won the film role, he has reached his breaking point, prompting a confrontation that threatens their bond forever. Through use of classical Hollywood lighting, documentary style handheld camera movement and technically challenging violin pieces, Besieged City depicts the darkness of jealousy, threaded within rivalry as two young brothers struggle to find value in their lives.

MENGCHEN NIU

Writer / Director

WILLIAM J. DEJESSA

Director of Photography

JULIA ECKENRODE

Production Designer



Gethomas.96  
@gmail.com



(267) 992-1295



Instagram:  
@besiegedcityfilm



Facebook:  
Besieged City

Executive Producer's (Gabriela Thomas) contact information & Media Sites for the film

CHUNGWEI HUANG

Producer

VALERIE J. BAILEY &  
GABRIELA THOMAS

Executive Producers

A S S U M P T I O N S N O T E

Gabriela Thomas

Co-Producer

267-992-1295 mobile

[tug04008@temple.edu](mailto:tug04008@temple.edu)

To: Executives of Interest

From: Gabriela Thomas

Re: Budget -- *Besieged City*

Date: January 9, 2016 -- 10:00 am -- Philadelphia, PA

Cc: Doug Claybourne

Please find attached the first draft of our budget for the short film project I am Co-Producing with my good friend and colleague, Valerie J. Bailey, entitled *Besieged City*. The budget is based on the 22-page script written by Mengchen Niu; who is a graduate student at Temple University and will be directing and editing this project.

Please also acknowledge the assumptions below, which allow us to arrive at this rough total of \$5, 890. At this point in the production process we have our Director, Director of Photography, Producer, Editors, and main actors locked. However, we are currently searching for supporting roles, grips, sound designers, makeup/costume artists, and a prop manager; therefore, this total is subject to change.

Principal photography is scheduled to start in June of 2017 and last up to 9 days (June 11th through the 19th).

This budget includes a production period cost of \$5,257, and a post-production cost of \$633.

It has not yet accounted for the cost of application fees for submitting the film into festivals, because at this time, we have not decided which festivals would be best to pursue.

If you have any questions at this point, please do not hesitate to ask.

Thank You,

Gabriela Thomas

# F I N A L      B U D G E T      T O P      S H E E T

Dated: November 28, 2017

Draft: 1

	Acct#	Category Description	Page	Total
1	1000	Story and Rights	1	0
2	1100	Producers	1	0
3	1200	Directors	1	0
4	1300	Cast	1	0
5	1400	Above-The-Line Travel/Other	1	0
6		<b>Total Above-The-Line</b>		<b>\$0</b>
7	1500	Extra Talent	3	0
8	1600	Production Staff	3	0
9	1700	Production Film & Lab	3	0
10	1800	Camera	3	649
11	1900	Wardrobe	4	411
12	2000	Makeup and Hairdressing	4	1,180
13	2100	Set Dressing	5	371
14	2200	Props	5	381
15	2300	Art Department	6	0
16	2400	Set Construction	6	0
17	2500	Video	6	50
18	2600	Sound Recording	6	755
19	2700	Set Lighting	7	0
20	2800	Set Operation	7	848
21	2900	Facilities	8	0
22	3000	Special Effect	8	0
23	3100	Locations	9	0
24	3200	Transportation	9	612
25	3300	Second Unit	10	0
26		<b>Total Production</b>		<b>\$5,257</b>
27	3400	Editing	11	187
28	3500	Music	11	67
29	3600	Post Production Sound	11	379
30	3700	Post Production Film & Lab	11	0
31	3800	Titles & Opticals	12	0
32		<b>Total Post Production</b>		<b>\$633</b>
33	3900	Insurance	13	0
34	4000	Publicity	13	0
35	4100	Product Placement	13	0
36	4200	General Expense	13	0
37		<b>Total Other</b>		<b>\$0</b>
38		<b>Total Above-The-Line</b>		<b>\$0</b>
39		<b>Total Below-The-Line</b>		<b>\$5,890</b>
40		<b>Total Above and Below-The-Line</b>		<b>\$5,890</b>
41		<b>Total Fringes</b>		<b>\$0</b>
42		<b>Grand Total</b>		<b>\$5,890</b>

**F I N A N C E P L A N**

This film will be financed mostly through grants and scholarships offered by Temple's Film and Media Arts program. If need be, small loans will be taken out and paid for through funding provided by on line resources—such as the film's Kickstarter campaign. Through Kickstarter, the production team anticipates family, friends, supporters, and audience members to help donate to the project. The film will start accepting donations during pre-production, through production, and far throughout post production. Once the film is finished, the production team hopes to find more money through distribution.

**D I R E C T O R ' S       S T A T E M E N T**

About two years ago, I wrote a film script about a depressed 15-year-old talented violinist who runs away after he finds out his father's affair. The inspiration for this script came from a Hong Kong documentary *KJ Music and Life*, which chronicled how KJ, a musical prodigy, learns to be a "human being". A year ago I began pre-production in China but ran into many roadblocks. I began to think maybe I'm too focused on the real KJ that I was forgetting the story I wanted to tell.

Regrouping in Philadelphia, where I am in graduate school, I'm engaged in the casting process again. This is how I met two very interesting people who stirred my curiosity. Feiyang Li, is a 25-year-old professional actor who played violin for 15 years before giving it up. He told me he is not a talented violinist, but he is an acting prodigy. The second person I met is Zeyu, a 19-year-old violin prodigy who has won a lot of international awards in his very young career. I was so surprise when he told me he was tired of competitions and wanted to be an film actor.

Their words kept echoing in my mind, mediocrity and genius are two common types of people in this world, I never imagined two such talented people would want to be someone else. Reading through my notes from their interviews, I incorporated their real stories of parental expectation, failure and success into my script about a pair of siblings, who face off over questions of talent and jealousy.

*Besieged City* is a dramatic short film which captures the raw spirit of a young generation of Chinese musicians, as seen through the lens of sibling rivalry. The film is also set against the backdrop of the complicated music education philosophy in modern China. After the Great Cultural Revolution, an influx of western culture sparked a flurry in learning to play western musical instruments in China. Almost every Chinese family trained their children to learn one western musical instrument in order that they not fall behind at the starting line. This quest for achievement has led to a series of mental health issues in Chinese culture, casting an ineradicable shadow on these children's entire lives. *Besieged City* is intended to shed light on the hidden damage experienced by countless generations of young Chinese musicians who dedicate their lives to their parent's western world dream.

- Mengchen Niu

**P R O D U C E R ' S       S T A T E M E N T**

At the start of my junior year at temple university, I was enrolled into a producing class for the Fall 2017 semester. I needed to produce a short film for the class, so when my good friend, Valerie Bailey, asked me to help her produce *Besieged City*, I was ready to get on board.

The first time I heard about this film was in Spring of 2017. It was still in it's pre-production stages and I had a number of peers planning to work on set during it's production period in July 2017. At that time, I was preoccupied with other projects and personalities. Now, I somewhat regret not working the set of *Besieged City* because after reading it's 22 page script and watching the rough cuts of the film, I wish I could have been there throughout its creation.

After reading the script, I felt moved from the story and it's characters. Personally, I come from a family of professional musicians and three siblings, so it was easy for me to relate to the characters. The story's emphasis on sibling rivalry, music, and the art of acting can capture the attention of many audiences—not to mention the beautiful cinematography done by William J. Dejessa.

I am so proud and thankful for the opportunity to now help bring this film into it's distribution period. In the coming months, the film will make more of an appearance on social media, film festivals, and hopefully, production houses.

- Gabriela Thomas

# M A R K E T A N A L Y S I S

## TARGET FESTIVALS

### TOP TIER

#### North America:

Toronto International Film Festival

Web: <https://pardo.ch/pardo/festival-del-film-locarno/home.html>

Application Fee: \$55/ \$85 for late submission

Deadline: Submissions open in February

#### International:

Berlin International Film Festival

Web: <https://www.berlinale.de/en/HomePage.html>

Application Fee: € 60

Deadline: November 15th

Cannes International Film Festival

Web: <http://www.festival-cannes.com/en/>

Application Fee: €30 early, €35 regular, €40 late

Deadline: February 15th

Locarno International Film Festival

Web: <https://pardo.ch/pardo/festival-del-film-locarno/home.html>

Application Fee: 50 CHF

Deadline: June 1st, 2018

Venice International Film Festival

Web: <http://www.labiennale.org/en/cinema/2017>

Application Fee: € 60

Deadline: June 15th

### Second Tier

#### North America:

TAnn Arbor Film Festival

Web: <https://www.aafilmfest.org>

Application Fee: \$30 early, \$45 official, \$60 late

Deadline: Early (July 1-July 31) Official (Aug. 1-31) Late (Sept. 1-Sept. 30)

Aspen Short Fest Web:

<https://aspenfilm.org/submit-your-film/>

Application Fee: \$75

Deadline: N/A

Chicago International Film Festival

Web: <https://www.chicagofilmfestival.com>

Application Fee: \$40 early, \$50 regular, \$70 late

Deadline: Early (April 2018) Regular (June 2018) Late (July 2018)

Heartland Film Festival

Web: <http://heartlandfilm.org/festival/>

Application Fee: \$30 early, \$45 regular, \$65 late

Deadline: Early (March 31) Regular (May 12) Late (May 22) Extended (June 2)

Los Angeles Film Festival

Web: <https://www.filmindependent.org/la-film-festival/>

Application Fee: N/A Deadline: February 2018

Seattle International Film Festival

Web: <https://www.siff.net> Application

Fee: \$80 late, N/A for Extended fee

Deadline: Late (January 5) Extended (February 2)

South by Southwest

Web: <https://www.sxsw.com/festivals/film/>



Application Fee: \$60 early, \$80 regular, \$110 late

Deadline: Early (August 25) Official (September 22) Late (October 20)

St. Louis International Film Festival

Web: <http://www.cinemastlouis.org>

Application Fee: N/A

Deadline: Early (March 31) Regular (June 30) Late (July 31)

Sundance Film Festival

Web: <https://www.sundance.org/festivals/>

Application Fee: \$40 early, \$60 official, \$80 late

Deadline: Early (August 7) Official (August 21)

Late (September 15)

Tribeca Film Festival

Web: <https://tribecafilm.com/festival>

Application Fee: \$60

Deadline: December 1, 2017

International:

Clermont-Ferrand International Short Film Festival

Web: <http://www.clermont-filmfest.com/?nlang=2>

Application Fee: No registration fee

Deadline: July 2018

Guanajuato International Film Festival

Web: <http://giff.mx/en/>

Application Fee: \$25

Deadline: Haven't released information yet

International Short Film Festival

Oberhausen

Web: <https://www.kurzfilmtage.de/en/>

Application

Fee: No entry fees

Deadline: February 1, 2018 Melbourne

International Film Festival

Web: <http://miff.com.au>

Application Fee: \*In AUD\* \$75 early, \$85 regular

Deadline: Regular (February 18) Late (March 31)

Odense International Film Festival

Web: <http://www.filmfestival.dk>

Application Fee: \$22

Deadline: April 1, 2018

Raindance Film Festival

Web: <https://www.raindance.org>

Application Fee: £25 early, £35 regular, £50 late

Deadline: Early (April 27, 2018) Regular (May 18, 2018) Late (June 1, 2018) WAB Extended (June 8, 2018)

Short Shorts Film Festival

Web: <http://www.shortshorts.org/index-en.php>

Application Fee: \$30

Deadline: January 31, 2018

Tampere Film Festival

Web: <https://tamperefilmfestival.fi>

Application Fee: € 13

Deadline: December 1, 2018

Warsaw Film Festival

Web: <https://wff.pl/en/zgloszenie-filmu>

Application Fee: € 5, € 15

Deadline: Official (July 15, 2018) Late (July 31, 2018)

## M A R K E T A N A L Y S I S

## POTENTIAL DISTRIBUTORS

Factory 25

Web: <http://www.factorytwentyfive.com/>

Contact :

<http://www.factorytwentyfive.com/contactfactory25/>

Genre: Shorts, Documentary, Experimental Film



China Lion Film Distribution Inc.

Web: [www.chinalionentertainment.com](http://www.chinalionentertainment.com)

Contact: Robert Lundberg (Manager, Western Media & Relations) / (310) 461-3066

Genre: Focuses on Chinese/Asians films in North America



Click Clack Short

Film Distribution

Web: [www.clickclackshortfilms.com/](http://www.clickclackshortfilms.com/)

Contact: [clickclackshortfilms@gmail.com](mailto:clickclackshortfilms@gmail.com)

Genre: Shorts



## POTENTIAL VENUES

International House Philadelphia

Address: 3701 Chestnut St Philadelphia, PA 19104

Website: [www.ihousephilly.org](http://www.ihousephilly.org)

Telephone: 215-895-6546

Philadelphia Film Society- Philly Film Showcase

Address: PFS Roxy Theater 2023 Sansom Street

Website: <http://filmadelphia.org/showcase>

Email: [akoehler@filmadelphia.org](mailto:akoehler@filmadelphia.org) (Allison Koehler)

Rooftop Films

Address: PMB 401, 285 5th Ave, Brooklyn. NY 11215

Website: [www.rooftopfilms.com](http://www.rooftopfilms.com)

Telephone: 718-417-7362

Anthology Film Archives

Address: 32 Second Avenue (at 2nd St.) New York, NY 10003 USA

Website:

[http://anthologyfilmarchives.org/film\\_screenings/newfilmmakersinfo](http://anthologyfilmarchives.org/film_screenings/newfilmmakersinfo)

Telephone: 323-302-5426

Asian Arts Initiative

Address: 1219 Vine St Philadelphia, PA 19107

Website: [www.asianartsinitiative.org](http://www.asianartsinitiative.org)

Telephone: 215-557-0455

# M A R K E T A N A L Y S I S

## TARGET AUDIENCES

### Primary

#### **Asians 17-30**

The film centers on two young Asians that are musicians. Specifically, these characters play classical instruments. Among many individuals of Asian heritage, the integration of classical music in their lives has been an instrumental aspect of their lives growing up. To reach this group, marketing to and/or building partnerships with important music organizations such as the Philadelphia Orchestra, Kimmel Center, and the Curtis Institute of Music which hold a variety of events that cater to lovers of music through workshops, galas, etc. Also, reaching this group through the internet on sites such as Facebook or Instagram would prove beneficial, as Asian Americans spend a total of 19.1 hours online a week on a computer, smartphone or tablet which is 08. hours or more than the total US population.

### Secondary

#### **Asian Families**

An underlying theme of the film centers on the emphasis of family values intertwined with identity in Chinese culture. Yang and Victor present a break in the typical structure, due in part to the influence of American values towards music as well as life. An Asian family would find great similarities in this as there is a true representation within the film of the struggle to maintain their own cultural values within the United States, a place vastly different. A common way to reach this group is through social media with special attention to the presentation of content by presenting imagery that shadows the system of Asian family values e.g. Yang and Victor together with their violins.

### Tertiary

#### **Individuals with Siblings**

The film is structured around two Chinese half-brothers, something quite usual in Chinese culture. Yang, 24, and Victor, 17, compete throughout the film for a movie role which interferes with their brotherly bond. Many people across the U.S. and throughout the rest of the world understand the complex, interdependent relationship siblings have with one another. To reach this group, social media will be used, with special attention to the presentation of content, by emphasizing on the aspects of jealousy, competition, and dependence that siblings deal with on a regular basis. Typically, individuals around the ages of Yang and Victor (17-29) engage more on social media such as Facebook and Instagram, specifically 59% of users. By finding images or creating lines that are relatable, viewers feel enticed and more engaged with themes presented in *Besieged City*.

L O O K B O O K  
SHOOTING LOCATIONS

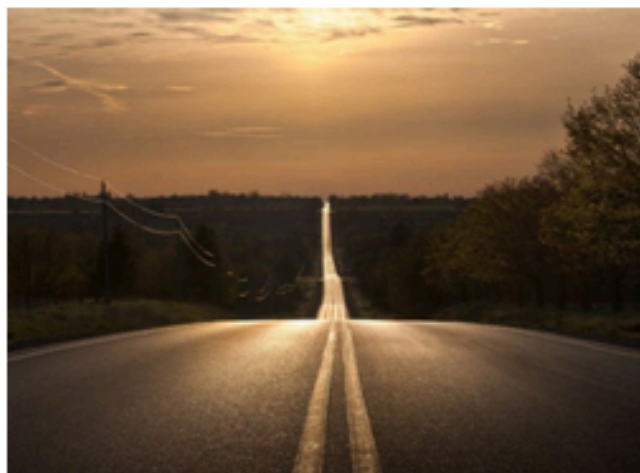
**Rittenhous Audio Studio**



**Philadelphia Local Apartment**



**Philadelphia Empty Street**



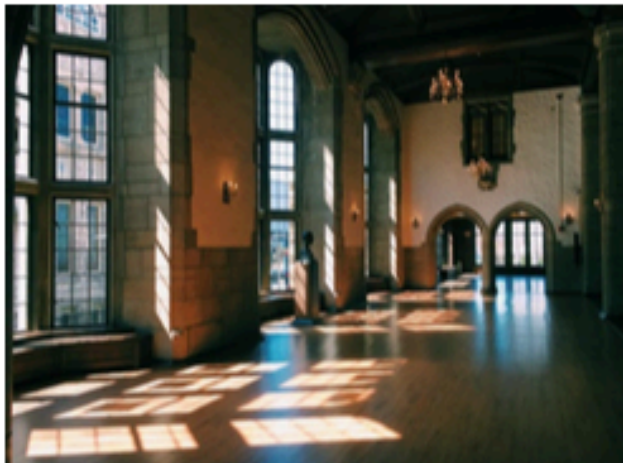


L O O K

**Zimbalist Room, Curtis Institute of Music**



**Mitten Hall, Temple University**



**Presser Hall, Temple University**

